



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 6, 2008

NEWS RELEASE

For more information:
Clayton Sinyai
202-373-2308
csinyai@malaborers.org

Tom Holdsworth
703-737-0607
tholdsworth@skillsusa.org

ASTRACOR Wins Grant to Develop Champions at Work
SkillsUSA awards inaugural Champions for Change grant to local school

ALEXANDRIA, VA – ASTRACOR (Asociación de Trabajadores de Construcción Residencial or the Residential Construction Workers' Association) is helping address the shortage of skilled, quality labor in construction with the implementation of a two-year grant that will help students develop their abilities and connect with employers. ASTRACOR is one of six sites nationwide chosen by Champions for Change, a SkillsUSA initiative supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

“Our students, many of whom are recent immigrants to the United States, often face a culture clash when entering the American workplace. Working with SkillsUSA, ASTRACOR will help them learn the skills, attitudes and habits they need to be valuable workers in today’s market,” said Dr. Clayton Sinyai, ASTRACOR Director. “ASTRACOR annually helps hundreds of young people in the Hispanic community find jobs in the construction industry, and this grant will enable us to expand the reach of our mission. Furthermore, the greater D.C. area will benefit from a talent pool of individuals more prepared and passionate for their jobs.”

ASTRACOR will use the grant to implement technical skill training and leadership development that is characteristic of SkillsUSA chapters. The smaller setting enables the pilot site to offer personalized attention to students and strong coaching as they deepen work force skills. Through the SkillsUSA program, ASTRACOR students have opportunities to develop influence, improve communication skills, serve the community and lead others.

“SkillsUSA provides students unparalleled opportunities because of our industry partnerships, both locally and nationwide,” said Tim Lawrence, Executive Director of SkillsUSA. “We are excited to see the success of ASTRACOR students and the communities it reaches.”

In addition to technical skill training and internship opportunities, the grant will enable students to document their proficiency through Skill Connect Assessments. For more information, visit www.workforcereadysystem.org.

-more-

ASTRACOR Wins Grant to Develop Champions at Work

Page two

Champions for Change (www.championsforchange.org) is a SkillsUSA initiative, supported by a W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant. The engagement will focus on workforce development in communities nationwide, validating entry-level workplace competency in trade, technical and skilled service professions. The SkillsUSA program model and a new system of portable credentials will help the W.K. Kellogg Foundation fulfill its mission of providing resources to individuals in vulnerable communities.

SkillsUSA (www.skillsusa.org) is a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled work force. SkillsUSA serves more than 285,000 students and instructors annually and has served more than nine million members since its founding in 1965. The organization has 15,000 member classrooms in 54 states and territorial associations. More than 14,500 instructors and administrators are professional members of SkillsUSA.